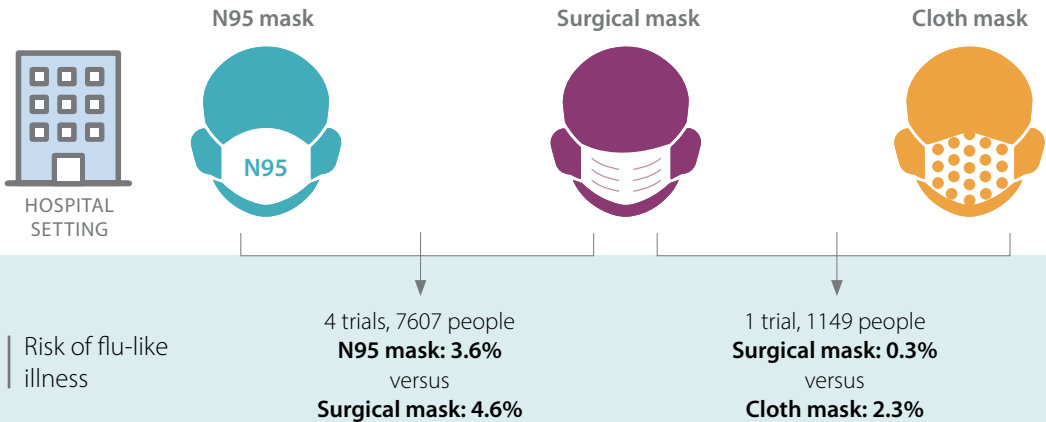


MASKS FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Based on evidence from randomized controlled trials

For healthcare workers, is there a difference between masks in protecting against flu-like illness?



If there is a difference between groups, it may be about 1% (range: 0-2%) over 4-12 weeks. No difference in lab-confirmed influenza or lab-confirmed viral respiratory infections.

The difference in flu-like illness may be 2% over 4 weeks (range: 0-2.3%).

Masks are only one part of preventing infection. Additional personal protective equipment and precautions should be used based on the clinical setting.

Can we trust these results?

Some of the limitations include:



Masks not worn consistently in studies.



Too few people got sick to show a difference in outcomes.



Definition of flu-like illness inconsistent between trials.



Infection spread outside of work setting may impact studies.



Interpretation of results sensitive to the statistics used.

What we do not know yet:

There is no research in primary care.

This research does not identify high-risk procedures requiring modification of mask use.

There is no research yet in COVID-19.